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## N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources

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### **ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY UNVEILS TOOLS DEVELOPED TO ASSIST PORK PRODUCERS IN MANAGING ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES**

RALEIGH – Following completion of a two-year grant, the N.C. Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA) has developed a set of online tools and documents designed to help North Carolina pork producers systematically manage their environmental activities.

In 2001, the Office of Water at the Environmental Protection Agency provided funding through a Water Quality Cooperative Agreement for DPPEA to work with eight pilot pork production farms to develop and implement site-specific environmental management systems (EMSs). An EMS is a tool that provides organizations with a method to systematically manage their environmental activities, provides structure, and helps them to achieve environmental obligations and performance goals. An EMS can be used by a wide range of organizations – from manufacturing facilities to service industries to agricultural operations to government agencies.

Using experiences gained from these farms as they went through the EMS development and implementation process, DPPEA has developed a comprehensive set of computer-based EMS tools, including work instructions for generic activities; common aspects, impacts, legal requirements and operational controls; and sample objectives and targets for improvements. The tools developed through this process are posted at <http://www.p2pays.org/porktool> for use by other pork producers. DPPEA worked on the project in cooperation with the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service and the N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation.

“(An) EMS enables you to look at your overall operation while examining the effectiveness of specific components that allow your farm to function daily,” said Chuck Stokes, owner of Little Creek Hog Farm in Pitt County, one of the pilot farms. “EMS allows us to incorporate a system of checks and balances that will hold us accountable to ourselves and others that will result in a more environmentally efficient farm.”

“DENR’s excellent work with this group of farmers has allowed the compilation of a comprehensive group of documents that should enable all different types of pork producers to develop environmental management systems,” said Jim Horne of the U.S. EPA. “We hope this information becomes a national model for pork producers across the United States, and are proud to be associated with the fine work taking place in North Carolina to promote EMS.”

Interest in an EMS model for pork producers has increased since the separate agreements signed in 2000 between the North Carolina attorney general’s office and Smithfield Foods and Premium Standard – which, among other things, require both companies to implement an ISO 14001-based EMS on all company-owned farms. ISO 14001 is an international standard adopted in 1996 that many organizations use as their model for an EMS.

For more information about this project, please contact Jamie Ragan, DPPEA environmental specialist, at (919) 715-6519 or [Jamie.ragan@ncmail.net](mailto:Jamie.ragan@ncmail.net).

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